

County of Loudoun
Office of Transportation Services
MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 16, 2007

TO: Loudoun County Planning Commission

THRU: Terrie Laycock, Acting Director, OTS
Art Smith, Senior Coordinator, OTS

FROM: George Phillips, Senior Transportation Planner, OTS

SUBJECT: **Summary of issues, updates, corrections with OTS
recommendations to the 2007 Countywide Transportation Plan
DRAFT**

Background

Since the release of the 2007 Countywide Transportation Plan DRAFT (Draft CTP) on May 15, 2007, OTS has received a variety of comments and requests from Loudoun citizens, Planning Commissioners and staff to make changes to the Draft CTP. Seven community meetings were held on August 27-30, September 6, September 12 and 19 to obtain citizen input regarding the DRAFT CTP. In addition, the Planning Commission subcommittees for eastern, central and western Loudoun reported out their comments on October 1, 2007. In order to update the full Planning Commission as to these recommended changes, updates and corrections to the DRAFT CTP, OTS has summarized these below and provided attachments where available. This summary is meant to help facilitate further discussion and decision at future Committee meetings of the Planning Commission. These are as follows:

ISSUE: Removal by the Planning Commission of the proposed Hillsboro and Lucketts Bypasses from further study and inclusion in the 2007 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) DRAFT. The majority of citizen comments to date have been against both the Hillsboro and Lucketts Bypasses (Attachments 1 and 2)

OTS RESPONSE: This has been noted on the draft 2007 CTP map. OTS supports options to better facilitate and minimize the significant projected traffic impacts in the Route 9 and Route 15 corridors including plan language which supports detailed corridor studies along both facilities with multiple solution options.

ISSUES: The Western Subcommittee of the Planning Commission recommends revised CTP language (See Appendix 3) including retaining Route 15 as a 2 lane road with Phase 2 and 3 improvements, assessment of the possibility of networking existing 2 lane roads west of Route 15 for improved local mobility, and development of local access points with traffic signals on Route 15 for the Lucketts/Leesburg area. For the Hillsboro/Purcellville area, upgrading the existing roads (Cider Mill, Woodgrove, Alder School and Route 690) to 35 mph collector standards, the implementation of traffic calming in Hillsboro, the provision of a corridor feasibility study for the realignment of Route 9 around the north side of Hillsboro, restriction of through-traffic in Hillsboro in conjunction with realigning Route 9 with necessary signage and enforcement and the addition of 4 lane capacity to Route 9 in the eastern most portion. For all areas, coordinate with Maryland for commuter transit and park & ride on both sides of the border, explore two or more two-lane Potomac River crossings east of Route 15, explore travel demand management strategies with Loudoun employers (Trip Reduction Ordinance), improve policies for jobs/housing balance and affordable housing and explore tolling impacts and strategies with state and federal agencies.

OTS RESPONSE: Within the context of a corridor study, OTS supports options to better facilitate and minimize the significant projected traffic in the Route 9 and Route 15 corridors. This would include Plan language which supports corridor studies with multiple solution options.

ISSUE: The Northwestern Loudoun Citizen Coalition requests the County to appoint and fund a task force study to address, with methodical review, Western Loudoun transportation issues including Route 9. (See Attachment 4).

OTS RESPONSE: OTS believes that this can be done within the context of a corridor study.

ISSUE: Concern from the Cactoctin Creek subdivision (Attachment 5), located on Route 287 south of Route 9 about the possibility of widening this portion of Route 287 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes as discussed in the CTP DRAFT recommendations. The Cactoctin Creeks HOA recommends that Route 287 remain as two lanes.

OTS RESPONSE: OTS supports maintaining the option of widening Route 287 in the future to accommodate the significant projected traffic.

ISSUES: The Central Subcommittee of the Planning Commission recommended several changes to the Draft CTP as follows:

- Maintain the recommendations from the Draft CTP Plan text and map which realign Riverside Parkway between Claiborne Parkway and Loudoun County Parkway to a closer, more parallel route to Route 7. This would include a constructible alignment that is compatible with approved land use applications in the vicinity and would traverse the southern portion of the Potomac Farms subdivision. The exact alignment through the Potomac Farms subdivision is considered flexible. Several citizens commented both for and against the alignment (Attachment 6). This alignment was recommended by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (Attachment 6).
- Remove the planned Lexington Drive bridge connection over Route 7. This will allow more flexibility in the alignment of Riverside Parkway.
- Remove the Route 860 Relocated and Route 860 Extended corridors between Sycolin Road and Route 15. The removal of the Route 860 extension south of Route 50 was also recommended by area citizens (Attachment 7). This corridor is considered problematic to build due to its impact on existing properties and flood plain.
- Maintain the recommendations from the Draft CTP Plan text and map which call for New Road to be widened to a four lane facility between Route 15 and Braddock Road. Some citizens indicated their opposition (Attachment 8). However, this is considered constructible in that it would expand an existing road. It would also help to relieve traffic at the Route 50/Route 15 intersection.

OTS RESPONSE: OTS agrees with the above recommendations with one exception. OTS continues to recommend that Route 860 Relocated, between Sycolin Road and Route 15, remain in the CTP if shown to be necessary with a future corridor study. OTS staff believes that this road is important to help better distribute north south traffic and reduce impacts to existing facilities such as Route 15 and Route 621. The exact alignment should be determined by a future corridor study.

ISSUES: The Eastern Subcommittee of the Planning Commission recommended several changes to the Draft CTP text and map including:

- Removing the designation to widen Route 625 (Church Road) from the existing four lane divided section to six lanes between Route 28 and Route 637 (Cascades Parkway).
- Installing a traffic signal at the Route 625/Lincoln Drive intersection.
- Keeping Shaw Road as two lanes between Cedar Green Road and Davis Drive
- Removing the proposed Shaw Road connection between existing Shaw Road and Cedar Green Road.
- Removing the planned Moran Road bridge crossing over Route 28 and Moran Road east from Route 28 to Davis Drive
- Improving/correcting the Draft CTP map to better delineate between existing facilities and planned facilities including how planned widening of existing facilities are shown.

Citizens of the Old Sterling Gables (Old Sterling Gables Conservancy) residential community provided similar requests including removing Moran Road east of Route 28, keeping Shaw Road as 2 lanes between Davis Drive and Cedar Green Road, removing the planned Shaw Road connection between existing Shaw Road and Cedar Green Road. They also requested a three way stop sign be added at the Shaw Road/Cedar Green intersection to improve safety. (See Attachment 9) The removal of the Moran Road bridge crossing Route 28 and east to Davis Drive is also recommended by an adjacent property owner (Attachment 10)

OTS RESPONSE: OTS recommends maintaining Route 625 as six lanes between Route 28 and Route 637 due to the anticipated congestion and the Moran Road connection over Route 28 as this will serve traffic destined to the Route 606 rail station to the south. OTS will provide some ideas for improving the Draft CTP map at the next meeting with the Planning Commission. Please note that VDOT, through the Route 28 Access & Circulation Study, is in the process of studying road access in this area (bounded by Route 28/Route 625, Davis Drive and Sterling Boulevard) and OTS recommends waiting for the results of the study before removing other planned road connections. Please note that VDOT is studying the Church Road Lincoln Avenue intersection with funding from the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

ISSUE: Reducing the width of the planned Transit Connector Road from 4 lanes to 2 lanes over the Dulles Greenway between the Loudoun Station and Moorefield developments (Attachment 11).

OTS RESPONSE: This was discussed at the July 23 PC Committee meeting and was recommended to be further discussed and decided at a future Committee meeting. Because the traffic model for the year 2030 indicates that a two lane road can accommodate the anticipated traffic, OTS would not object to this reduction provided adequate pedestrian facilities are constructed on this link.

ISSUE: Correction of the Route 659 alignment in the vicinity of the Bull Run Stone Quarry to reflect an approved alignment (Attachment 12).

OTS RESPONSE: OTS is in agreement with the proposed correction in order to be consistent with the approved alignment.

ISSUE: Downsizing of Route 659 (also know as Route 606 Extended) between Route 50 and Braddock Road from the six lane divided section included in the existing and Draft CTP to four lanes divided due to concerns about traffic affecting adjacent communities. (See attachment 13).

OTS RESPONSE: OTS favors maintaining the planned 6 lane divided section on this portion of Route 659 (Route 606 Extended) due to the anticipated future traffic on this facility.

ISSUE: Removal of the planned Route 50/Route 606 Extended interchange due to the anticipated impacts to a retail business in the vicinity (See Attachment 14).

OTS RESPONSE: OTS favors maintaining the planned interchange at this general location. Route 50 is planned to be a limited access facility and an interchange is needed at this location to accommodate future traffic volumes. Various developments in the vicinity have been approved in anticipation of this and other future road improvements. In addition, please note that this interchange has not yet been designed and that it is premature to conclude exactly how adjacent land uses will be impacted at this time.

ISSUE:-The addition of Crosstrail Boulevard between Route 621 and Route 15 as recommended by the Town of Leesburg (Attachment 15).

OTS RESPONSE: Due to existing homes in the corridor path and traffic congestion impacts to Route 15, this addition was not supported by OTS staff.

ISSUE: Concerns from the Town of Leesburg that the CTP Draft indicates that Business Route 7 would be converted to a pair of one way roads, objection to widening West Market Street to four lanes between Morven Park Road and the Route 7 Bypass and concerns about the traffic anticipated on Dry Mill Road by the traffic model (Attachment 16).

OTS RESPONSE: Please note that the one way pair and four laning of Business Route 7 were reviewed by our consultant's using the model. However, the Town has jurisdiction over these segments of Business Route 7 and no changes are reflected in the CTP Draft. Concerns regarding what the model shows on Dry Mill Road in the year 2030 should be further discussed and clarified with Town staff.

ISSUE: Concerns from the Town of Leesburg (Attachment 17) including the CTP DRAFT recommendation that Route 15 be widened north of Town and that this proposed widening should be removed.

OTS RESPONSE: Within the context of a corridor study, OTS supports options to better facilitate and minimize the significant projected traffic in the Route 15 corridor. This would include Plan language which supports corridor studies with multiple solution options. Also, OTS notes that the majority of the Route 7/15 Bypass and Route 7/15 Bypass/Dulles Greenway interchange is within the Town of Leesburg limits and is thus governed by the Town of Leesburg Plan. Also, interchange improvements will be studied as part of the Leesburg Bypass project funded by VDOT.

ISSUE: Concern from the Chief of the Arcola Volunteer Fire Department that access will be cut off to Route 50 from Gum Spring Road (Attachment 18).

OTS RESPONSE: Please note that Route 50 is planned to become a limited access road. OTS staff will look for opportunities for new access points, including emergency access, to address this concern.

ISSUE: Clarification by the Town of Purcellville that any transportation improvements proposed to be included in the CTP that would cross through the Purcellville Joint Land Management Area ((JLMA) will require review and approval by both the County and Town (Attachment 19). Also, in comments presented at the September 19 meeting (Attachment 20), the Town of Purcellville recommends realigning and connecting the proposed Purcellville Western and Northern Collector roads, extending the Purcellville Northern Collector eastward to a logical terminus such as Route 704, upgrading the Route 7 Bypass/Route 287 interchange, include 4 roundabouts at Route 287/Business 7, A Street/Maple Avenue, A street/20th Street and A Street/32nd Street (Route 690) and include Main Street as a scenic byway.

OTS RESPONSE: With the removal of the proposed Hillsboro Bypass from the JLMA, this is not currently an issue. OTS notes that most of the above road improvements within the Town of Purcellville limits and is thus governed by the Town of Purcellville Plan. More coordination is needed with the Town regarding the recommended extension of the Purcellville North Collector Road east of Route 287 and connecting the Purcellville Western and Northern collector roads.

ISSUE: The Prince William County planning staff has noted its agreement with the CTP Draft road connections and changes (Attachment 21). They also indicate a desire to coordinate inter County bicycle/pedestrian trails and transit facilities.

OTS RESPONSE: OTS supports coordination with Prince William County.

ISSUE: The Loudoun County Department of Planning (Attachment 22) has raised issues with the CTP Draft text language including unpaved roads as well as a series of clarifications and editorial corrections.

OTS RESPONSE: The policy language change proposed by OTS staff with respect to treatment of unpaved roads follows the practice that has been underway by the Board of Supervisors. The current language essentially prohibits paving of unpaved roads in the rural area. Since that policy has been in place, the board has supported paving several roads in the rural area when issues of safety and maintenance became an issue. This is a result of by-right development occurring in the vicinity of unpaved roads. OTS staff recommends the policy have flexibility to allow for paving to address safety and maintenance issues. Many of the numerous edits appear reasonable but further discussion with Department of Planning staff is recommended to finalize the recommended changes.

ISSUE: The Loudoun County Chamber Board of Directors (Attachment 23) supports specific corridor improvements to Routes 7, 9, 15, 28, 50, 606, 659 and Battlefield Parkway. In addition, they recommend a Western Transportation Corridor that links the Fredericksburg area in Virginia with Frederick Maryland, the original Loudoun Parkway connection to the Tri-County Parkway Comp Plan corridor and a Northern Potomac River crossing that extends from Route 28 into Maryland. Finally, they endorse acceleration of the Dulles Corridor Metro rail project, sustainable revenue sources for transit, local transit service to major businesses and job centers in Loudoun and encouragement of travel demand strategies (TDM) to help the Dulles area.

OTS RESPONSE: Through the current Draft CTP OTS supports many of these facilities.

ISSUE: OTS staff has concerns about the existing and anticipated projected traffic congestion at Route 50/Stone Springs Boulevard and Route 625/Route 607 intersections.

OTS RESPONSE: The Office of Transportation Services recommends that, due to poor levels of service and access issues at the above intersections, study recommendations should be included in the CTP DRAFT to determine if grade separated interchanges should be added at the Loudoun County Parkway/Route 625 intersection and at Route 50/Stone Springs Boulevard just west of existing Route 659.

ISSUE: The Waterford Foundation, Inc. has provided recommendations to enhance the Rural Road Policies in Chapter 3 of the CTP Draft text. (See Attachment 24). These additions reflect a desire to preserve historic landscapes. This includes adding a policy supporting traffic calming efforts in the Waterford Historic District and additional language to policies 10,13,14 and 15 on page 3-14 of the Draft CTP text.

OTS RESPONSE: In general, OTS does not object to the proposed additions and we support traffic calming measures. However, the proposed additions to policy 10 include new criteria which are not recommended. It recommends addressing the “nature of the road users (local v. unfamiliar drivers)” which would seem difficult to measure and determine. Also, it is redundant in that the language repeats that accident data will be considered.

ISSUES: Edits of the CTP text in Chapters 4 have been made by OTS and Planning staff and in Chapter 7 by Building & Development staff. A correction to the Bike and Pedestrian Appendix 5 notes is also proposed from OTS staff. (See Attachments 25, 26 and 27).

OTS RESPONSE: OTS does not object to the proposed additional editing of the DRAFT CTP text.

D drive/C Drive files/CTP Issues Update